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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 3421
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1239
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1106
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 1675
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1397
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2254
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0739

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ASHGABAT 000264

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR SCA/CEN, G/OES

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [TSPL](#) [KTIA](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN'S PARLIAMENT RATIFIES MONTREAL
PROTOCOL

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

12. (SBU) SUMMARY: Turkmenistan's Mejlis (Parliament) on January 22 adopted a resolution on Turkmenistan's accession to the Montreal Protocol, apparently so that the Ministry of Nature Protection will be eligible for additional donor funds. The Ministry of Nature Protection has an ambitious list of education and public awareness projects for students and adults that it would like to undertake, but for which it lacks sufficient funds. This ministry is doing its best to promote sound ecological practices in Turkmenistan with limited resources. END SUMMARY.

13. (SBU) On January 22, Turkmenistan's Parliament adopted a resolution regarding Turkmenistan's accession to the Copenhagen, Montreal, and Beijing amendments to the Montreal Protocol for the Protection of the Ozone Layer. According to National Ozone Center Coordinator Vladimir Vervedo and Department of Ecological Program Coordination Head Bekmurad Eyeberdiyev, the Ministry of Nature Protection is responsible for implementing the Montreal Protocol, in cooperation with the Ministry of Power Engineering and Industry, State Customs Service, and Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Nature Protection's National Ozone Unit (NOU) monitors the phasing out of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) and collects ODS consumption data. The Ministry sends documentation declaring Turkmenistan's imports and consumption of ozone depleting substances, certified by "Gosstandart" and "Turkmenchemie," to the Montreal Protocol authorities on a yearly basis.

14. (SBU) The Ministry's Center for Ecological Observation currently operates four labs, but used to have six. It also has a Center for the Control of Atmospheric Air. Each province has its own nature protection department. The Ministry approves new building projects for ecological soundness, and checks documentation of existing buildings for leaks. If the Ministry finds problems, it will insist that the building be rebuilt. Vervedo explained that the Ministry

closed one small private construction firm that used R-12 refrigerant (found in old refrigerators and air conditioners) in 2007.

MOTIVATION TO SIGN MONTREAL PROTOCOL: MONEY

15. (SBU) Vervedo and Eyeberdiyev said that Turkmenistan's Parliament decided to sign the Montreal Protocol in January in order for Turkmenistan to advance its work in this sphere. They added that only Montreal Protocol signatories are eligible for funds distributed by the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol. Turkmenistan also wants to receive funds from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), an independent financial organization that provides grants to developing countries for projects that benefit the global environment. (NOTE: According to Ministry documentation, Turkmenistan has received assistance from GEF for various projects since 1998. END NOTE.)

CHALLENGES TO RIDDING TURKMENISTAN OF ODS

16. (SBU) A group of Ministry of Nature Protection experts are working on the "National Environmental Action Plan" project, which aims to bring Turkmenistan's legislation to international norms. Vervedo said that the Montreal Protocol's Enclosure A takes effect in 2010, at which time R-12 refrigerant will be illegal, according to the Protocol's guidelines. Citing illegal sales of Mexican ODS products in the United States, Vervedo said that the Government of Turkmenistan is concerned about illegal sales of these ODS products within its borders as well. Certain asthma inhalers are of particular concern, as these products are used primarily by the elderly, who cannot afford more expensive, environmentally friendly inhalers. The Ministry is also

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paying close attention to large industrial refrigerators typically used to store milk products in order to get a sense of how much equipment will need to be replaced.

OUTREACH TO YOUTH

17. (SBU) The NOU has produced an 18-minute film in Russian and Turkmen, as well as 200 CDs on ozone depletion. They speak to school and university groups, and sponsor art exhibitions based on this theme.

NATIONAL OZONE CENTER'S WISH LIST

18. (SBU) Vervedo said that his office could accomplish more, if additional funds were available. He mentioned the following:

-- The NOU asked the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for a gas and liquid chromatographer in order to identify chemical content, but UNEP refused.

-- The NOU wants to publish educational materials on the ozone layer for youth such as booklets, books, and brochures. UNEP financed the translation of a comic book on ozone issues into Russian, and the NOU is looking for financing for a Turkmen version.

-- The NOU wants to translate technical literature into Turkmen for repairmen of refrigerators or equipment using refrigerants.

-- The State Customs Service needs a laboratory to verify chemical composition of substances.

19. (SBU) COMMENT: In hydrocarbons-rich Turkmenistan, the Ministry of Nature Protection occupies a unique niche role. Most of its personnel are committed ecologists trying to do good work for their country, but they face an uphill battle, given the country's overwhelming dependence on hydrocarbon production as a source of revenue. However, the president's

decision to try to meet world standards -- including on ODS
reduction -- is giving the Ministry a fresh purpose, even if
there is no new or additional funding. END COMMENT.
HOAGLAND